



Friends of Michigan History, Inc.

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FRIENDS OF MICHIGAN HISTORY, INC

Meeting Minutes

Lansing, Michigan

April 9, 2007

Call to Order

President Bus Spaniola called the Board of Directors (Board) meeting of the Friends of Michigan History (Friends) to order at 10:15 AM.

Board Members Present: David Brickey, Adriana Greci Green, Keith Harrison, Keith Pohl, Charles Seeley, Tom Shawver, Bus Spaniola, Paul Tarr, Tom Truscott, Geneva Wiskemann, and Bill Wellman.

Board Members Absent: Richard Johnson, and Louise Stilwill.

Board Members Excused: Richard Johnson, and Louise Stilwill.

Michigan Historical Museum (Museum) Staff Present: Chris Dancisak.

Approval of Agenda

A motion was made and seconded to adopt the agenda as presented; motion passed.

Minutes from Previous Meeting

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes from the previous meeting; motion passed.

President's Report

President Spaniola indicated that he would like to address the Old *Business* item regarding the *Friends-Museum-Foundation Memorandum of Agreement* (Agreement) under his report. He indicated that there had been proposed by the Michigan History Center Foundation (Foundation) a minor change on page 4, Item C (MHCF GIFT APPEAL) which dealt with the Foundation's operation and with that change, the Foundation had approved the Agreement for signature by its Chairperson.

A motion was made and seconded to approved the minor change made by the Foundation in the Agreement and to authorize the President of the Friends to sign the Agreement; motion passed.

President Spaniola also indicated that he was in receipt of a request for funds from State Archivist Mark Harvey regarding conservation of documents. He indicated that he would bring the issue up later in the meeting for consideration

Treasurer Report

There was no formal report from the Treasurer due to his absence. Despite the

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absence of a Treasurers' report, the Board was still able to determine that the:

1. Friends had \$8,916.46 as of March 1, 2007;
2. Friends had received \$2,103.10 from the Foundation for new and renewing members for March 2007; and
3. Treasurer had paid the March 2007 Board-approved expense check for Old Country Caterers for \$517.00.

Given the above, the Board determined that the Friends had approximately \$10,502.56 in available funds.

Discussion ensued about the need for a comprehensive Treasurer's written report even if the Treasurer is absent and also about the need for the Friends to ensure that it is following all applicable Internal Revenue Service regulations regarding acknowledgement of donations to 501 (c)(3) organizations. It was requested that the Friends Secretary find out the content of the current standard "thank you" letter that is normally prepared and sent out on behalf of the Friends.

A motion was made and seconded that in addition to the standard "thank you" letter that is sent to all new and renewing members, that the Friends' President also send a special "thank you" note to all those new and renewing members who have joined or renewed at the \$100 and \$500 level; motion passed.

Presentation of Bills

No bills were presented for payment.

Museum Report

Chris Dancisak reported that the Governor has issued a series of executive orders that impact the state's ability to purchase, travel and conduct business in a "normal" manner. The reality of these orders is that purchasing through the state system will be very difficult, time consuming, and, in some cases and for some activities, impossible. Also, there is a moratorium on state grants that is having a significant impact on local government, arts, and cultural organizations and some human services programs. Except for salaries and fringes, which are paid for from state General Funds, the Museum operates its various exhibits and programs with the use of funds from the Foundation, Friends, and other outside organizations. Consequently, many of the Museum's activities are not impacted directly by the cuts. However, this could change if there is a need to also start cutting state General Funds in the future.

Given the above, Chris indicated that the Museum would like to request up to \$4,000 from the Friends to support the Museum's next special exhibit, *A' Hunting We Will Go-- The History of Deer Hunting in Michigan*, which is scheduled to open in August 2007. In addition, it was requested that the Friends pay the suppliers directly for specific exhibit related materials, educational programs, and opening reception expenses, from bills presented to the Friends for those items. In response to a question, it was indicated that the Museum did not have planned any additional exhibits that would need financial support from the Friends for the remainder of Fiscal Year 2007.

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A motion was made and seconded to support the Museum's request for up to \$4,000 and to pay the vendors directly for the exhibit-related materials, educational programs, and opening reception expenses, associated with the August 2007 Special Exhibit entitled, A' Hunting We Will Go--The History of Deer Hunting in Michigan; motion passed.

Chris Dancisak brought up a second issue regarding the Walker Tavern's wish to establish an operating board and to sell consignment items and refreshments through a small on-site museum store.

A motion was made and seconded for a draft model letter of agreement to be developed, based on the Friends Bylaws and the new Friends-Museum-Foundation Memorandum of Agreement, that could be used to address the Walker Tavern issues and similar issues of other Friends' Affiliates; motion passed.

President Spaniola appointed a special committee (Affiliate Special Committee) composed of David Brickey, Keith Harrison, Bus Spaniola, Paul Tarr, and Tom Truscott. President Spaniola will serve as chair. The committee was charged with development of the draft model letter of agreement and to present this draft agreement to the Board at the May 14, 2007 meeting.

President Spaniola indicated that he had received an email from State Archivist Mark Harvey stating that it appeared that the Michigan Week Bob Milne Concert would not take place and, therefore, there would not be a need for the March 2007 Board-approved request of \$1,000 to support this concert. It also was reported that Mr. Harvey requested that the Board consider a request of \$3,500 to support the conservation of Archives architectural drawings; specifically the deacidification, photographing, and encapsulation of the Orlando Barnes Mansion drawings.

A motion was made and seconded to rescind the Board's March 2007 approved \$1,000 for the Milne Concert and to approve up to \$1,000 towards document conservation as outlined by the State Archivist; motion passed.

Committee Reports

A. *Map Preservation Committee* – No report.

B. *2007 Veterans Day Program Committee* – Paul Tarr reported that the committee would be meeting in the next ten days to go over the details for the program. Also, the date of Sunday, November 4, 2007 was selected for the 2007 Veterans Day Program.

C. *Board Nominating Committee* – Keith Pohl reported that he currently has one individual who has committed to becoming a new Board Director (Mr. Larry Griffin). Mr. Griffin is planning on joining the Friends and the Board later this fall. Keith indicated that he will continue to work on other possible members.

D. *Membership Committee* – No report.

E. *Magazine/Military Committee* – Paul Tarr reported that he will be getting together later this month with the person in charge of arranging for the transport of the magazines.

F. *Grants Committee* – No report.

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New Business

It was reported by Tom Shawver that the Michigan Political History Society (Society) has expressed interest in sharing membership lists for the purpose of increasing membership in both organizations. After a discussion, it was requested by the Board that the President get back with the Society to come to an agreement regarding how the Friends' membership list can be used. Specifically, the Friends' membership list cannot be shared or sold to a third party and that the use of the Friends' list would be for a one time basis. It also was suggested that President also might raise the possibility of some sort of joint project between the two organizations be considered in the future.

President Spaniola indicated that given the financial situation of state government that the Friends, Foundation, and other state historical societies reconsider a proposal to help raise funds for state historical projects by sponsoring a special state historical license plate.

A motion was made and seconded to allow the President to re-explore with the Foundation and other state historical organizations the possibility of raising funds for state historical programs through the sponsorship of a special state historical license plate; motion passed.

Keith Harrison reported that the Friends was now registered to set up a display in the *Step Back in Time Education Area* at the Jackson, Michigan Cascades Civil War Muster. The Civil War Muster will take place August 24 - 26, 2007. It was indicated that in addition to the display, we would need membership brochures, brochures on the Michigan Historical Center, and probably back copies of *Michigan History* magazine. It also was indicated that since we had requested electrical outlet access, we also could have a DVD or Video running highlighting, for instance, the Michigan Historical Center. President Spaniola requested the Membership Committee take on the responsibility of making all the arrangements for this display including the development of a schedule for Board directors and other Friends members to man the display area during the Civil War Muster. Subsequent reports on this topic will be presented under the Membership Committee reports.

It was reported by David Brickey that a traveling exhibit on Vietnam was coming to Michigan. He will provide more information on this when it becomes available. He also indicated that there was an exhibit in Evert, Michigan that should be seen regarding the first soldier killed in the European Theater of World War II.

Geneva Wiskemann stated the there was an exhibit entitled, *A Legacy of Service and Courage: the World War II Generation*, which is currently at the Macomb Cultural Center. It will run through May 19, 2007. A brochure was passed around for the Board to look at regarding this exhibit. Additional information regarding the exhibit may be obtained by accessing the Macomb Cultural Center website at <http://www.macombculturalcenter.com> or by calling the Macomb Cultural Center at 586-445-7348.

David Brickey related briefly about his recent trip to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii.

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Bill Wellman talked briefly about the book entitled, *Death's Door: the Truth behind Michigan's Largest Mass Murder* by Steve Lehto. The 2006 book is about the Michigan copper strike of 1913 - 14. It was one of Michigan's most bitter labor actions. Michigan State militia, on horseback, was deployed against the strikers. Strike leaders, lead by "Big" Annie Clemenic, rallied the strikers by hosting a Christmas party at the Italian hall. While the miners' families were celebrating Christmas Eve at Italian Hall in Calumet someone yelled, "Fire!" In panic, the crowd rushed to get out of the second-floor hall. They could not open the door to the outside and 73 people -- mostly children -- died in the crush. There was no fire, however. Many miners believed that the mine companies had sent the person who caused the panic, and while this could never proved, it seems the most likely explanation. Eye witnesses saw company agents in the area but could not identify them. The crime remains unsolved to this day.

Old Business

There was no old business to discuss.

Adjournment

It was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned; motion passed.

The meeting was adjourned at 12:02 PM.

Respectively submitted,

Keith G. Harrison

Keith G. Harrison, Secretary
Board of Directors
Friends of Michigan History, Inc.

The next Regular Board meeting will be Monday, May 14, 2007, 2007, in Lansing.